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USA

REUNITE FAMILIES SEEKING SAFETY—END CRUEL SEPARATIONS

On March 21, U.S. immigration authorities detained the parents of a Venezuelan family of five, tearing them away from their three young children, all under 12. Even though the family has Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and pending asylum applications, officials charged the parents with “illegal” entry—more than two years after they first arrived at the southern border.

Everyone has the right to seek asylum, no matter how they enter the U.S. Detaining people with valid TPS is unlawful. We urge the Trump administration to release these parents immediately, reunite them with their children, and stop the cruel practice of family separation.

Write to the Acting Director, Immigration and Customs Enforcement urging him to:

- Release Cesar and Norelia immediately so they can reunite with their young children.
- End family separation and stop tearing children away from their parents.
- Stop family detention and ensure families seeking safety are not locked up.
- Halt mass detention and deportations that punish people for seeking protection.

Write to:

Todd Lyons,
Acting Director, Immigration and Customs Enforcement
500 12th St SW
Washington, DC 20536, USA
Email: Todd.M.Lyons@ice.dhs.gov
Salutation: Dear Mr. Lyons

And copy:

Mrs. Marybeth Krumm Turner
Minister-Counsellor & Chargé d'affaires, a.i.
Embassy of the United States of America
490 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, ON K1N 1G8
Tel: (613) 238-5335 / 688-5335 (24h) Fax: (613) 688-3082

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In recent weeks, President Trump has ramped up actions that harm people fleeing danger. His administration is using cruel tactics to scare communities, separate families, and detain those seeking safety. Activists and community members are also being targeted.

On March 21, 2025, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Washington, D.C., detained Cesar and Norelia, parents of three young children. Despite having Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and pending asylum applications, they were charged with illegal entry—more than two years after arriving at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Cesar, Norelia, and their extended family fled Venezuela due to political persecution. They arrived in Texas in 2022 and applied for asylum. Their TPS status allows them to live and work legally in the U.S. It also protects them from detention based on their immigration status.

Earlier in March, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) arrested Cesar and Norelia. On March 12, a federal judge ordered their release while awaiting a court hearing in Texas. However, the next day, they were taken from jail, brought to a federal court in Washington, D.C., and immediately detained again by ICE—only to be released hours later.

For weeks, Cesar and Norelia complied with all ICE check-ins. Yet on March 21, ICE arrested them again. Cesar is now held at Farmville Detention Center, and Norelia is at Caroline Detention Center.

The Trump administration is now using 8 U.S.C. 1325, the same law behind its first-term family separation policy, to target long-time residents—not just new arrivals. Cesar and Norelia's case could impact thousands of others who entered the U.S. irregularly but have since gained legal protections.

Everyone has the right to seek asylum, no matter how they arrive. People fleeing persecution or serious human rights violations cannot be forced to return to danger. This principle, known as non-refoulement, is a key protection under international law.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has urged all countries to stop deporting Venezuelans. Amnesty International has also called for an absolute ban on deportations to Venezuela due to ongoing human rights violations.

Separating families causes severe trauma, especially for children. Amnesty International has found that these policies can amount to torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. Families belong together. Seeking asylum is a right, not a crime.

Please take action as soon as possible until June 24, 2025. The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.